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ABSTRACT

Recognizing that public relations is a field in search of the status and benefits of professionalism but which too often is conducted by unqualified, unprofessional people, a study sought to research and analyze the importance of a broad range of tentatively defined knowledge and skill areas considered essential to contemporary public relations practices. The study employed a mail survey of a random sample of 400 members of the two major public relations associations to determine (1) practitioners' knowledge and skill competencies on a broad range of topics; and (2) the perceived importance of these to the practitioners' professional development. Information was also elicited about the respondents' career levels, educational background, professional activities, and other demographics. The questionnaire consisted of some 34 skill and 71 knowledge areas which were drawn from professional development guidelines. The 221 respondents identified numerous skill and knowledge areas in which discrepancies existed between the practitioners' self-assessed competencies and the perceived importance of these skill and knowledge areas to their professional development. These results showed an apparent lack of broadly-educated generalists in the public relations function and indicated a need for professional development training and education for almost all of the 14 composite skill and knowledge areas assessed in the study. (Nine tables of data are included and 17 references are attached.) (NH)

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS ANALYSIS: A STUDY OF COMMUNICATION PRACTITIONERS

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> One of the most widely held beliefs in the United States today is the positive value of professionalism for the improvement of society. Americans generally agree that the professionalization of occupations creates individual practitioners who are more aware of their responsibilities to the wider society and more concerned with the ethical nuances of their craft, business or trade. In communication-related occupations, for example, both practitioners and the general public view professionalism in such terms as honesty, objectivity, truth, and ethicality, all of which are presumed to contribute to the betterment of society as well as to the refinement of the occupation (Schultz, 1981, p. 64).

As Schultz has suggested, the professionalization of an occupation enhances the whole of society, the occupation itself, and the individual practitioners.

Although public relations is not considered by many, especially those outside the field, to be a profession today, there is little doubt that it is a field in search of the status and benefits of professionalism. The literature and activities of the field abound with references to professionalism and recently increased efforts to achieve it. Summaries of the basic criteria of contemporary definitions of professionalism are also abundant. From a public relations perspective, Gruning has defined five areas in which public relations must qualify before becoming professionalized: (1) a set of professional values, (2) membership in strong professional organizations, (3) adherence to professional norms, (4) an intellectual tradition and an

established body of knowledge, and (5) technical skills acquired through professional training (1984, p. 63).

There is a notable lack of emphasis here and in many similar definitions on two standard requirements of the traditional professions: formal pre-professional education and continuing professional education. Obviously, one or both could be considered to be assumed in the broad interpretation of the numerous definitions of professionalism. For all of the traditional professions, formal, highly structured, rigorous entry-level education and training are assumed and subsequent continuing professional development has become increasingly required. Curiously, public relations, with all its interest in professionalism, is one of the few fields attempting to achieve professionalism without the same degree of rigorous formal education, training and continued professional education that are considered essential in professions such as medicine, law, education, accounting, architecture, and engineering.

Historically, the professions included medicine, law and theology. After modern industrialization, however, many occupations began to pursue professional status (Hu, 1978).

Why Professional Status?

As we move further into an information society, the role of public relations becomes increasingly important. Public relations practitioners, however, as well as the field itself, are too often misunderstood and too often viewed as unprofessional.

One of the biggest problems public relations faces is that

the practice is often conducted by unqualified, unprofessional people. Moore and Kalupa (1985) point out:

> The rapid growth of public relations has attracted many inexperienced, unethical practitioners who have created a false image of the activity and detracted from the honest efforts of the great majority of competent, ethical public relations people. Spurious publicity stunts, false organization fronts, suppression of negative facts, influence peddling, deceptive publicity,

and similar unethical practices have aroused criticisms, (p. 35). Today, anyone can claim to be a public relations counselor regardless of whether he or she has the basic skills, experience and background.

Because of the misconceptions, negative attitudes and poor image associated with public relations, there has been an effort on the part of many practitioners to obtain professional status for the field. "Professional status affects the prestige and rewards of everyone involved in a particular occupational group, and today many lines of work contend for societal acceptance by seeking recognition as `professions'" (Wright, 1978, p. 26).

Is public relations a profession? This question is still not answered, if indeed it will ever be answered. Public relations practitioners can't even agree if they want to be considered professionals.

Ranney said definitely not. He explained: " . . . it could absolutely destroy the marvelously creative urges that earned public relations people their reputations--deservedly--as solvers of the problems that have baffled our most distinguished leaders of business and government" 1977, p. 27).

Fenton, on the other hand, said that " . . . either its practitioners agree that public relations can gain the status of

a profession, delineate the function, set objectives and goals and work toward them, or concede defeat" (1977, p. 16).

Two ways to examine professionalism among public relations practitioners are through their professional development activities, and through the basic skills and attributes each one possesses.

Professional development is important in any occupation or profession to ensure that practitioners are keeping up with the latest trends and technological advances. There has been an increased effort in the past few years on the part of the professions to adopt professional development policies and activities. Many of the professions have mandatory continuing education requirements in order to have licenses renewed and to continue practicing in the field. "The movement for mandatory continuing education has grown substantially in the last few years as state legislatures have responded to the public demand for some way to insure that professionals--from accountants to veterinarians--are competent" (Watkins, 1979, p. 9).

The accounting profession has elaborate continuing education programs conducted by the accounting societies, most notably the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Stern, 1983).

Prior to 1971, a physician could receive a license and it was for life. Now 26 states have passed continuing education laws and physicians must be recertified periodically. In order to be recertified, a physician must usually take 150 hours of professional development courses every three years (Stern, 1983).

Lawyers must have a state license and be registered with the

official bar organization of the state where they practice (Le Breton, et al., 1979). Six states have mandatory continuing legal education programs and require an average of 15 credit hours per year.

Teachers constitute one of the oldest professions and were among the first to be required to participate in continuing education (Lisman, 1980). Today, 28 states require (or are considering requiring) some form of continuing education for their public school teachers.

Purpose of this Study

Given that professionalism offers the field of public relations benefits such as those described earlier, especially those noted by Schultz at the beginning of this paper, the need for research is evident. If public relations is to become more professional, increased education and training must be developed and embraced by those already practicing public relations, as well as those planning to enter the field. This can be achieved through both formal education and through professional development, or continuing education, activities. In a field, such as public relations, heavily populated by practitioners frequently lacking, at least relative to traditional professionals, rigorous academic and professional standards, off-the-job professional development and subsequent continuing education are of critical concern. However, what knowledge and skills are essential to "professional" public relations practitioners are still far from being finely defined in spite of major recent efforts in that direction, especially those of three of North America's largest and leading professional associations:

the Public Relations Society of America, the International Association of Business Communicators, and the Canadian Public Relations Society.

Drawing from all three of these associations, particularly the typically pioneering efforts of the Canadians, this study sought to research and analyze the importance of a broad range of tentatively defined knowledge and skill areas considered essential to contemporary public relations practice, including both the practitioners level of competency and perceived degree of importance of these knowledge and skill areas.

Central to this study are the competencies identified, at least tentatively, by the major associations of the field. A brief summary of these is contained in the Public Relations Society of America's official statement as follows:

> Examples of the knowledge that may be required in the professional practice of public relations include communication arts, psychology, social psychology, sociology, political science, economics, and the principles of management and ethics. Technical knowledge and skills are required for opinion research, public issues analysis, media relations, direct mail, institutional advertising, publications, film/video productions, special events, speeches, and presentations (Moore & Kalupa. p. 6).

In the field of public relations, as in many professional occupations, what is being taught in formal education courses today will be out of date in five or ten years. Additionally, many current practitioners have had no formal training for the field. Therefore, continuing education for public relations practitioners, is crucial to professionalization.

METHODOLOLGY

Data in this study were gathered through the use of a self-administered questionnaire which, measured respondents' levels of skill and knowledge and the degree of importance of these skill and knowledge areas to their professional development. The questionnaire was mailed to a random sample of 200 members of the Public Relations Society of America and 200 members of the International Association of Business Communicators. The study was conducted in the Fall of 1986.

Questionnaire

Part One of the questionnaire listed 34 attributes under the categories of communication, project management, consulting, management, and interpersonal skills. For each of the attributes, a five-point Likert-type scale was used and the respondents were asked to rate their current degree of capability and the importance to their professional development for each attribute.

Part Two of the questionnaire was designed to measure how the respondents assessed their knowledge of some key concepts and principles underlying professional activities. There were 71 concepts and principles in this section under the categories of writing, public relations, graphics/publications, interpersonal relations, political science/government, accounting/finance, economics, marketing and advertising, and management. The respondents were asked to rate their degree of knowledge and the degree of importance to their professional development on a five-point Likert-type scale for each item.

The questionnaire also sought information about the

respondent's career level, educational background, professional activities, and other demographics.

Sources for Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed from three primary sources. The first source was a Canadian Public Relations Society needs analysis conducted in 1981-82, which drew upon the Canadian society's manpower training standards. Permission was granted from the Public Relations Department, Mount St. Vincent University, and the Advanced Management Centre, Delhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, to use their model Canadian analysis as a guide in the preparation of this questionnaire.

A similar version of this questionnaire was administered to members of the Canadian Public Relations Society in 1981-82 (White & Trask, 1982). A subsequent pilot study was conducted in the United States in 1985 (Hammonds).

Additional sources used to develop the questionnaire included the Public Relations Society of America's Guidebook (Druck & Hiebert, 1979), the International Association of Business Communicator's Professional Development Guide (1983), and the results of a Delphi study on future educational needs conducted under a grant from the Foundation for Public Relations Research and Education (Kalupa & Allen, 1982).

FINDINGS

Response Rate

Four hundred questionnaires were mailed to a randomly-drawn sample of United States members of the two major public

relations associations. Twenty-nine of the questionnaires were returned as undeliverable, resulting in a usable sample of 371. Of these, 221 questionnaires were returned, yielding a response rate of 59.6 percent.

In Part One of the questionnaire the respondents assessed their degree of current skill (Scale A) and the degree to which they felt the skills were important to their professional development (Scale B). Respondents rated the skill or its importance on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from (1) not very skillful or important to (5) very skillful or important.

To identify the skill areas that require further professional development training and education, the discrepancy between the assessment of current skill capability and the degree of importance for that skill was calculated. A positive discrepancy number indicates that the respondents rate the skill of greater importance to their professional development than they rate their own competency. A negative discrepancy figure indicates the respondents rate their level of skill higher than they rate the skill's importance to their professional development. Tables 1 through 9 report only the highest values of the five-point scale (points 4 and 5), those skills which the respondents consider to be the most important.

Communication Skills Assessment

Of the eight writing skills reported in Table 1, only two showed significant positive discrepancies: speeches (12.3) and presentations (11.3). Marketing/promotional writing skills showed a small discrepancy (.5). All other skills reflected negative discrepancies: news releases, 6.0; feature

articles, .3; brochures. 3.6; information materials, 6.3; and special reports, 7.8.

INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

The second area of communication skills is media relations. The results here suggest that respondents perceived themselves to have skills slightly below the level of perceived importance: news conference (.5);and working with media personnel (5.9).

The next section under communication skills, public speaking techniques, revealed a discrepancy of 15.4.

The editing skills section showed negative discrepancy scores for both items: editing publications (5.4), and fundamentals of copy editing (7.3).

Reading and audio-visual skills discrepancies were both positive (4.6 and 6.2 respectively).

The last section under communication skills, graphic communication, showed low discrepancy scores, The discrepancy for the ability to assess layout of printed materials was negative (1.9), and the ability to manage and plan graphic productions was positive (1.9).

Project Management Skills

The four items under project management (Table 2) reflected generally higher discrepancy figures: developing project goals, priorities and plans, 14.9; establishing and monitoring financial controls, 28.5; ability to resolve conflict, 14.2; and ability

to coordinate individual tasks and bring project to conclusion, 5.3.

INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

Of the five consulting skills assessed, four items show positive discrepancy scores (Table 2). The ability to identify social issues affecting the organization and counseling management showed 15 and 16.3 discrepancies respectively. Ability to influence others and ability to identify social issues were 14.7 and 14.6. Only sensitivity to client needs showed a negative discrepancy (1.8).

Management Skills

Table 3 displays discrepancy figures for management skills. The six items in this section have discrepancy scores ranging from relatively low to relatively high: ability to train staff, 4.6; ability to plan and organize, 6.9; ability to monitor and follow up on tasks, 9.2; ability to set goals, 12.9; ability to motivate others, 15.2; and conflict management, 22.6.

INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

The last skill area in this section, interpersonal skills, showed low discrepancy scores: ability to relate well to

others, 4.1, and ability to be sensitive to the needs of others, 4.4.

Knowledge Base and Importance

The second section of the questionnaire dealt with the respondent's assessment of their current knowledge base and the importance of that knowledge to their professional development.

As in the skills section, a five-point Likert-type scale was used, ranging from (1) not very knowledgeable or important to (5) very knowledgeable or important.

Only the highest values (point 4 and 5) on both sets of scales and the discrepancy between the two are reported here to examine how the respondents assessed their knowledge compared to the perceived importance of the knowledge areas studied.

Writing Knowledge

The nine items under writing showed wide variation: interview techniques, 5.0; information gathering techniques, 5.5 persuasive writing techniques, 20.9; editing principles, 0; different media functions, 2.3; the communication process, 1.8; writing styles, 8.4; marketing/promotional, 17.8; and program preparation, 18.8.

INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

Public Relations Knowledge

The next knowledge area, public relations, was an extensive section of 24 different items (Table 5). The discrepancies for these items ranged from -8.1 to 34.9, showing significant variation in the different public relations knowledge areas.

INSERT TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE

Only three items produced negative discrepancies: special event planning (8.1), mass media role and responsibility (7.8), and relationship of community needs to organizational goals (.7).

Of the 21 items suggesting the greatest potential for increased professional development, the discrepancies between self-reported knowledge and perceived importance were highest for research methodology (17.2), uses of public opinion and communication research (21.9), measurement and evaluation techniques (34.9), communication planning process (10.3), communication/public relations law (10.7), business law (20.4), crisis and emergency management (24.9), communication policy formulation (19.3), application of new technology (26.7), investors needs (27.8), consumer needs (15.6), needs of special interest groups (15.2), and government needs (26.8).

Graphics/Publication Knowledge

Table 6 displays discrepancies for the knowledge area, graphics/publications. The items in this section range in

discrepancy from 2.8 (photographic techniques) to 13.3 (graphic design principles). The discrepancy scores for layout and illustration techniques and audio-visual techniques were 7.3 and 11.0 respectively.

INSERT TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE

The four items under interpersonal relations produced high discrepancy scores (Table 6). Power and influence in social relationships was the lowest (19.1). Introducing change was highest (28.3). Group dynamics and conflict were both 26.3.

Political Science Knowledge

The political science/government area produced a wide range in discrepancies (Table 7). The lowest were knowledge of government structure (.9), and structure of political systems (3.9). Knowledge of the lobbying process had a 14.4 discrepancy. Coordinating public relations with public affairs and legal had a discrepancy of 16.1. The highest discrepancy was knowledge of legislation and regulations, 22.5.

INSERT TABLE 7 ABOUT HERE

Accounting and Finance

In the accounting and finance knowledge area,

discrepancies were extremely high: budget techniques, 37.9, and financial statements, 36.8.

Economics

The economics knowledge area produced generally high discrepancy scores (Table 7). Investor/financial relations showed the highest discrepancy between knowledge and perceived importance to the respondents' professional development, 31.4. Monetary and fiscal policies, and principles of supply and demand had discrepancy scores of 29.0 and 29.7 respectively. The discrepancy for economic education preparation was the lowest, 21.1.

Marketing and Advertising

Table 8 displays scores for the marketing and advertising knowledge area. Four of the items reflected relatively low discrepancies: advertising agency operations (4.8), principles of advertising (5.3), relationship of public relations, advertising and marketing (7.5), and techniques of advertising (9.1). The other three knowledge areas showed relatively high discrepancies: techniques of marketing, 25.2; marketing process, 24.6; and principles of marketing, 20.4.

INSERT TABLE 8 ABOUT HERE

Management Knowledge

The principles of management (Table 9) section produced

a number of relatively high discrepancy scores, with the lowest discrepancy score being 15.3, principles of labor relations. The highest discrepancy was for financial management, 45.3. Other relatively high discrepancy scores in this section included: principles of management (21.4), principles of motivation (25.6), managing creativity (22.5), strategic organizational planning, 33.1, problem analysis, (30.1), developing strategies and priorities (19.9), emergency and crisis policy and planning (26.9), and integrating public relations and organizational goals (23.1).

INSERT TABLE 9 ABOUT HERE

CONCLUSION

Although no clear consensus of support emerges from the current literature, there clearly exists extensive discussion of interest in and efforts to achieve professionalization of the practice and practitioners of public relations. Among the several factors for which there is considerably less clarity is an understanding of what knowledge and skill requirements are central to public relations. Definition of the basic competencies deemed essential to the successful practice of public relations assumes potential significance, especially when applied to education and training for both the entry-level preparation and continuing

professional development. In this connection, Druck and Hiebert noted:

> Because the profession is changing, the need for continuing education is more urgent than ever. We run the risk of having our skills and knowledge become obsolete in a few years unless we keep ahead of the changes through training and job development (1979, p. 10).

Traditionally, professions are characterized by well defined admission criteria, including prescribed programs of education to provide minimum levels of professional preparation. Increasingly, most of the traditional professions today also required programs of continuing education to insure on-going professional development. While major efforts are underway to achieve some degree of professionalization in public relations, the practice is not currently the beneficiary of prescribed education and training for either the entry level or on-going professional development of practitioners. Recognizing this, the current study employed a mail survey of a random sample of 400 members of the two major public relations associations in an attempt to determine (1) practitioners' knowledge and skill competencies on a broad range of topics, and (2) the perceived importance of these to the practitioners' professional development. The questionnaire consisted of some 34 skill and 71 knowledge areas which were drawn from professional development guidelines of the Public Relations Society of America, the International Association of Business Communications, and the Canadian Public Relations Society as well as other sources.

The 221 respondents identified numerous skill and knowledge areas in which discrepancies exist between the practitioners'

self-assessed competencies and the perceived importance of these skill and knowledge areas to their professional development. The self-assessment revealed perceived needs for further training and education in a total of 92 of the 105 skill and knowledge areas, 25 of the 34 skill areas and 67 of the 71 knowledge areas.

In order to provide a less complex summary of the results of this study, mean scores were tabulated for each of the five skill areas and the nine knowledge areas. These results can be found in Table 10. As can be seen from the table, professional development training and education is indicated almost all of the 14 composite skill and knowledge areas assessed in the study.

INSERT TABLE 10 ABOUT HERE

The lowest discrepancy mean was for communications skills (.1), with interpersonal skills reflecting an overall low discrepancy average of 4.2.

The lowest discrepancies between the respondents' self-assessed knowledge and perceived importance in their professional development were in writing (8.5) and graphics/ publications (8.6).

The highest discrepancies were in the knowledge areas, accounting/finance (37.3), economics (27.8), interpersonal relations (25.0), and principles of management (24.7).

Results show an apparent lack of broadly-educated generalists in the public relations function. One possible implication the study suggests is that, indeed, there may be too many

communications mechanics and too few counselors who can aid top management in the complex, dynamic environment in which organizations operate today. Minimally, the study found that the practitioners perceive themselves to be lacking the broad skill and knowledge areas they consider essential to their professional development.

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TABLE 1

Communication Skills

	Very Skillful*	Very Important*	Discrepancy
A. Writing Skills:			
New Releases	87.5	81.5	-6.0
Feature Articles	73.7	73.4	-.3
Speeches	51.6	63.9	12.3
Brochures	76.7	73.1	-3.6
Marketing/Promotional Materials	63.9	64.4	.5
Informational Materials	85.5	79.2	-6.3
Special Reports	78	70.2	-7.8
Presentations	69.6	80.9	11.3
Mean**	73.3	73.3	0
B. Media Relations Skills:			
Arranging News Conferences and Briefings	66.7	67.2	.5
Effectiveness in Working with Media Personnel	74.5	80.4	5.9
Mean**	70.6	73.8	3.2

* Highest values (Point 4 and 5) on skill and importance.

** Mean values shown here are for all skills within broad skill category.

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Communication Skills

	Very Skillful*	Very Important*	Discrepancy
C. Public Speaking Techniques	62.2	77.6	15.4
D. Editing Skills:			
Publication Editing/Layout	73.8	68.4	-5.4
Fundamentals of Copy Editing	85.2	77.9	-7.3
Mean**	73.7	74.6	.9
E. Reading Skills	89.1	93.7	4.6
F. Audio-Visual Skills	51.6	57.8	6.2
G. Graphic Communication:			
Ability to Assess Layout of Printed Material	78.4	76.5	-1.9
Ability to Manage/Plan Graphic Productions	63.4	65.3	1.9
Mean**	70.6	73.3	2.7

* Highest values (Point 4 and 5) on skill and importance.

** Mean values shown here are for all skills within broad skill category.

TABLE 2

Project Management and Consulting Skills

	Very Skillful*	Very Important*	Discrepancy
A. Project Management:			
Developing Project Goals, Priorities and Plans	76.4	91.3	14.9
Establishing and Monitoring Financial Controls	53.7	82.2	28.5
Ability to Resolve Conflict	71.3	85.5	14.2
Ability to Coordinate Individual Tasks and Bring Project to Conclusion	87.8	93.1	5.3
Mean**	72.3	88.0	15.7
B. Consulting Skills:			
Sensitivity to Client Needs	88.1	86.3	-1.8
Ability to Influence Others	76.1	90.8	14.7
Ability to Identify Causes of Problems and Recommend Courses of Action	77.5	92.5	15
Ability to Identify Social Issues Affecting the Organization	56.5	71.1	14.6
Ability to Counsel Management on Strategies for Dealing with Social Issues	57.2	73.5	16.3
Mean**	71.1	82.8	11.7

* Highest values (Point 4 and 5) on skill and importance.

** Mean values shown are for all skills within broad skill category.

TABLE 3

Management and Interpersonal Skills

	Very Skillful*	Very Important*	Discrepancy
A. Management Skills:			
Ability to Set Goals and Objectives	80.2	93.1	12.9
Ability to Plan and Organize Tasks	89.0	95.9	6.9
Ability to Monitor and Follow Up on Tasks	83.9	93.1	9.2
Ability to Train Staff in Job Skills	75.4	80.0	4.6
Conflict Management	53.9	76.5	22.6
Ability to Motivate Others	73.2	88.4	15.2
Mean**	75.9	87.8	11.9
B. Interpersonal Skills:			
Ability to Relate Well to Others	90.9	95.0	4.1
Ability to Be Sensitive to the Needs of Others	88.2	92.6	4.4
Mean**	89.6	93.8	4.2

* Highest values (Point 4 and 5) on skill and importance.

** Mean values shown here are for all skills within broad skill category.

TABLE 4

Writing Knowledge

	Very Knowledgeable*	Very Important*	Discrepancy
Interview Techniques	67.6	72.6	5.0
Information Gathering Techniques	82.2	87.7	5.5
Persuasive Writing Techniques	61.4	82.3	20.9
Editing Principles	82.6	82.6	0
How Different Media Function	74.4	76.7	2.3
The Communication Process	85.6	83.8	-1.8
Writing Styles	71.0	79.4	8.4
Marketing/Promotion	58.0	75.8	17.8
Communication Program Preparation	68.5	87.3	18.8
Mean**	72.4	80.9	8.5

* Highest values (Point 4 and 5) on knowledge and importance.

** Mean values shown here are for all knowledge areas within broad category.

TABLE 5

Public Relations Knowledge

	Very Knowledgeable*	Very Important*	Discrepancy
Corporate Social Responsibility	64.7	67.6	2.9
Role and Responsibility of Mass Media	72.0	64.2	-7.8
Relationship of Community Needs to Organizational Goals	60.4	59.7	- .7
Social and Corporate Issues	61.9	64.4	2.5
Research Methodology	38.4	55.6	17.2
Uses of Public Opinion and Communication Research	36.9	58.8	21.9
Measurement and Evaluation Techniques	30.3	65.2	34.9
Principles of Public Relations	68.9	69.8	.9
Theories of Communication, Persuasion and Public Opinion	51.7	58.8	7.1
Communication Planning Process	66.1	76.4	10.3
Communication/Public Relations Law	26.4	37.1	10.7

* Highest values (Point 4 and 5) on knowledge and importance.

** Mean values shown here are for all knowledge areas within broad category.

TABLE 5 (Continued)

Public Relations Knowledge

	Very Knowledgeable*	Very Important*	Discrepancy
Business Law	15.7	36.1	20.4
Communication/Public Relations Ethics	69.7	70.9	1.2
Crisis and Emergency Communication Management	54.2	79.1	24.9
Communication Policy Formulation	53.4	72.7	19.3
Special Event Organization and Planning	74.3	66.2	-8.1
Application of New Communication Technologies in Public Relations	37.3	64.0	26.7
Needs of Investors	24.3	52.1	27.8
Needs of Consumers	53.5	69.1	15.6
Needs of Employees	77.8	82.3	4.5
Needs of Special Interest Groups	52.2	67.4	15.2
Needs of Government	38.7	65.5	26.8
Needs of Media	76.1	81.8	5.7
Needs of Community	64.2	73.5	9.3
Mean**	52.9	64.9	12.0

* Highest values (Point 4 and 5) on knowledge and importance.

** Mean values shown here are for all knowledge areas within broad category.

TABLE 6

Graphics and Interpersonal Relations Knowledge

	Very Knowledgeable*	Very Important*	Discrepancy
A. Graphics Publications:			
Graphic Design Principles	43.6	56.9	13.3
Layout and Illustration Techniques	43.6	50.9	7.3
Photographic Techniques	44.8	47.6	2.8
Audio-Visual Techniques	36.0	47.0	11.0
Mean**	42.0	50.6	8.6
B. Interpersonal Relations			
Group Dynamics	35.4	61.7	26.3
Conflict Resolution Strategies	34.5	60.8	26.3
How to Introduce Change in Organization	38.7	67.0	28.3
Power and Influence in Social Relationships	43.9	63.0	19.1
Mean**	38.1	63.1	25.0

* Highest values (Point 4 and 5) on knowledge and importance.

** Mean values shown here are for all knowledge areas within broad category.

TABLE 7

Political Science, Accounting, Economics Knowledge

	Very Knowledgeable*	Very Important*	Discrepancy
A. Political Science Government			
Government Structure	54.0	54.9	.9
Structure of Political System	46.9	50.8	3.9
Legislation and Regulations Affecting Your Organization	50.3	72.8	22.5
Lobbying Process	34.6	49.0	14.4
Coordinating Public Relations With Public Affairs and Legal Staff	45.8	61.9	16.1
Mean**	46.3	57.9	11.6
B. Accounting Finance:			
Budget Techniques	38.4	76.3	37.9
Financial Statements Preparation	29.9	66.7	36.8
Mean**	34.2	71.5	37.3
C. Economics:			
Monetary and Fiscal Policies	17.6	46.6	29.0
Principles of Supply and Demand	36.9	66.6	29.7
Investor/Financial Relations	23.6	55.0	31.4
Economic Education Preparation	14.2	35.3	21.1
Mean**	23.1	50.9	27.8

* Highest values (Point 4 and 5) on knowledge and importance.

** Mean values shown here are for all knowledge areas within broad category.

TABLE 8

Marketing and Advertising

	Very Knowledgeable*	Very Important*	Discrepancy
Principles of Advertising	52.6	57.9	5.3
Techniques of Advertising	48.2	57.3	9.1
Principles of Marketing	46.3	66.7	20.4
Techniques of Marketing	38.8	64.0	25.2
Advertising Agency Operation	38.3	43.1	4.8
Marketing Process	41.4	66.0	24.6
Relationship of Public Relations, Advertising and Marketing	64.7	72.2	7.5
Mean**	47.2	61.0	13.8

* Highest values (Point 4 and 5) on knowledge and importance.

** Mean values shown here are for all knowledge areas within broad category.

TABLE 9

Principles of Management

	Very Knowledgeable*	Very Important*	Discrepancy
Informing and Educating Management	48.5	64.9	16.4
Principles of Management	50.0	71.4	21.4
Principles of Motivation	50.2	75.8	25.6
Principles of Personnel	27.0	44.2	17.2
Managing Creativity	51.4	73.9	22.5
Principles of Labor Relations	16.6	31.9	15.3
Strategic Organizational Planning	34.3	67.4	33.1
Financial Management	20.3	65.6	45.3
Problem Analysis/ Identification	46.7	76.8	30.1
Developing Strategies and Priorities	61.2	81.1	19.9
Emergency and Crisis Policy and Planning	45.8	72.7	26.9
Integrating Goals of Public Relations With Organizational Goals	61.2	84.3	23.1
Mean**	42.8	67.5	24.7

* Highest values (Point 4 and 5) on knowledge and importance.

** Mean values shown here are for all knowledge areas within broad category.

TABLE 10

Skill and Knowledge Area Mean Scores

	Very Skilful*	Very Important*	Discrepancy
A. Skills:			
Communication Skills	73.3	73.3	0
Consulting Skills	71.1	82.8	11.7
Project Management Skills	72.3	88.0	15.7
Management Skills	75.9	87.8	11.9
Interpersonal Skills	89.6	93.8	4.2
	Very Knowledgeable*	**Very Important***	**Discrepancy**
B. Knowledge:			
Writing	72.4	80.9	8.5
Public Relations	52.9	64.9	12.0
Graphics/Publications	42.0	50.6	8.6
Interpersonal Relations	38.1	63.1	25.0
Political Science/Government	46.3	57.9	11.6
Accounting/Finance	34.2	71.5	37.3
Economics	23.1	50.9	27.8
Marketing and Advertising	47.2	61.0	13.8
Principles of Management	42.8	67.5	24.7

* Highest values (Point 4 and 5) on skill and importance.